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From: Monahan, Stacey (EHS) <stacey.monahan@massmail.state.ma.us>
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2012 2:28 PM
To: Hanchett, James (DPH)
Subject: Important message from Secretary Bigby

Colleagues:

I am writing today to inform you that in wake of the events at the former DPH drug lab in Jamaica Plain, Governor Patrick has accepted Commissioner John Auerbach's resignation.

This news does not come lightly and it speaks to the seriousness of the malfeasance that transpired at the drug lab involving a former chemist and thousands of drug samples which the chemist handled. Commissioner Auerbach acknowledges that as head of DPH, the responsibility for the management of all programs in the Department ultimately lies with him.

Over the past six years, under Commissioner Auerbach's leadership, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has reestablished itself as one of the best Departments of Public Health in the nation. The list of accomplishments is long: launching Mass in Motion, a major initiative to combat obesity and promote wellness; strengthening efforts to prevent chronic and infectious diseases; heightening efforts to combat substance abuse; successfully implementing sports head injury regulations; and strengthening the Department's focus on perinatal health outcomes. These efforts have lead to the lowest rates of HIV infections and deaths in decades, a decrease in the rise of opiate overdose deaths and holding the line on childhood obesity.

While the failures in the drug lab are unacceptable, I know they in no way represent the dedication, intelligence and commitment to public service that characterize the people who work in HHS. I am thankful every day to work with such a talented team.

Commissioner Auerbach has agreed to remain with EHS for the coming weeks to ensure a smooth transition at DPH while also aiding law enforcement in their investigation of the lab. John has been a valued member of my team for the past six years. I am grateful for his service and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Sincerely,

JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.
Secretary, Health and Human Services